

## The First Constitution of Indiana



Indiana entered the Union as the 19th state on December 11, 1816. The basic law of Indiana from 1816 to 1851 was the state's

first constitution.

Parts of the constitution are said to have been written beneath a huge elm tree in Corydon, the first state capitol.

Its authors borrowed heavily from the constitutions of neighboring Kentucky and Ohio as well as from our federal Constitution.

The Hoosier document prohibited slavery and made it the duty of the state to establish a free public school system including a state university.

This constitution also set up the three branches of government.

However, governmental problems involving principally the bonded debt of the State prompted the calling of a

Constitutional Convention in 1850.



## The Second Constitution of Indiana

Writers gathered in Indianapolis for 18 weeks to develop a new constitution that reflected the growth and progress of the state.

Major changes from the 1816 Constitution were provisions for:

- ☞ More frequent elections
- ☞ More elective offices
- ☞ Biennial rather than annual sessions of the General Assembly
- ☞ A restriction on state debt
- ☞ An easier method of amending the constitution.

**Approved in Convention at  
Indianapolis,  
February 10, 1851**

**Adopted by the Electorate,  
effective November 1, 1851**

## The Nuts & Bolts of the Indiana Constitution

The Indiana Constitution is broken into 16 sections, which are called articles.

- Article 1** - Bill of Rights
- Article 2** - Suffrage and Election
- Article 3** - Distribution of Powers
- Article 4** - Legislative
- Article 5** - Executive
- Article 6** - Administrative
- Article 7** - Judicial
- Article 8** - Education



- Article 9** - State Institutions
- Article 10** - Finance
- Article 11** - Corporations
- Article 12** - Militia
- Article 13** - Indebtedness
- Article 14** - Boundaries
- Article 15** - Miscellaneous
- Article 16** - Amendments

The Indiana Constitution is the seventh oldest and the third shortest among the 50 states.



Since Indiana was established as a state on December 11, 1816, the Hoosier State and its citizens have been a part of change,

progress and growth.

The 21st Century brings the promise of even more changes, exciting growth and positive progress for all of us. While change is constant, the values reflected in our Constitution remain steadfast. The beliefs out-lined are those that have made our country and state strong and powerful for the benefit of all Americans.

Sincerely,

Jeff Drozda  
State Senator  
District 21

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# *The Indiana Constitution*



## ***PREAMBLE***

***TO THE END, that justice be  
established, public order  
maintained, and  
liberty perpetuated;  
WE, the People of the State of  
Indiana, grateful to  
ALMIGHTY GOD for the free  
exercise of the right to choose  
our own form of government,  
do ordain this Constitution.***